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Action

Control: 18123

IO

Rec'd: April 27, 1962
2:09 a.m.

Info

FROM: NEW YORK

S/S

SS

TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 3556, APRIL 26, 8 PM

SB

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OUTER SPACE

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1. FURTHER TO STEVENSON-BALL LETTER OF 19 APRIL, FACT THAT WE HAVE SHIFTED FROM POSITION PRIOR TO OUR PUTTING OUTER SPACE RESOLUTION THROUGH UN THAT WE COULD SUBMIT DATA ON ALL LAUNCHES (DEPTEL 1463), TO ONE WHERE SOME SHORT TERM LAUNCHES -- THOSE WHICH HAVE "DECAYED" BETWEEN REPORTING DATES, ARE NOT REPORTED (TODIS 180), HAS CREATED SERIOUS POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES WHICH SOVS ALREADY PREPARING TO EXPLOIT. FACT WE NOT REPORTING ALL LAUNCHES IS WIDELY ASSUMED AND IS CREATING CONSIDERABLE EXPLOITABLE INTEREST.
2. EVIDENCE OF SOV AWARENESS AND INTENTION IS FOUND IN COURSE OF RECENT BILATERAL TALKS AS WELL AS IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY SOV REP IN SPACE COMITE. SPECIFICALLY, ON 27 MARCH MOROZOV CALLED FOR TECH SUBCOMITE MEETING GENEVA 28 MAY TO WORK OUT UNIFORM PROCEDURE FOR REGISTRATION OF ALL RPT ALL OBJECTS LAUNCHED IN ORBIT OR BEYOND IN "CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER" FROM BEGINNING TOGETHER WITH DATA RE PURPOSE. HE MADE CLEAR SOV VIEW THAT THIS WAS MATTER FOR COMITE TO DECIDE AND NOT ONE TO BE LEFT TO DISCRETION OF LAUNCHING STATE. POSSIBILITIES OF CREATING GENERAL APPREHENSIONS ALONG LINES U-2 OR AT LEAST RB-47 CASE THEREFORE EXIST. BLAGONRAVOV'S OBSERVATION RE DECLARATION OF NON-USE OF SATELLITES FOR MILITARY RECONNAISSANCE REPEATED TODIS 174 SHOWS ISSUE WE ARE FACING.
3. WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING PRECISELY WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO CONCEAL WE ARE UNABLE TO RECOMMEND FIRMLY HOW OUR POSTURE CAN BE IMPROVED. BUT SOVS KNOW THEY HAVE FOUND SENSITIVE NERVE AND THEY WILL

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UNQUESTIONABLY CONTINUE TO PROBE IN EXPECTATION THEY CAN AT LEAST CAUSE US EMBARRASSMENT AND POSSIBLY FORCE US TO DISCLOSE MORE INFO THAN THEY NOW HAVE. PRESENT SUGGESTED LINE OF DEFENSE -- THAT UN RES INTENDED TO PROVIDE FOR CONTINUING PERIODIC INVENTORY OF OBJECTS AT THE TIME IN ORBIT -- IS NOT SATISFACTORY. COUNTER IS TOO SIMPLE: WHY NOT REPORT WHAT HAS GONE UP AND COME DOWN IN MEANTIME; IF U.S. IS NOT WILLING GIVE THIS INFO THERE MUST BE HIDDEN REASON. FURTHERMORE, PRESENT POSITION, THAT WE REPORTING EVERYTHING IN ORBIT ON CERTAIN DATES, PROBABLY CANNOT BE MAINTAINED INDEFINITELY; SOONER OR LATER LAUNCHES WHICH WE NOW APPARENTLY ARE CONCEALING BETWEEN REPORTING DATES WILL STILL HAVE PAYLOAD IN SPACE ON REPORTING DATE. WE WILL THEN HAVE TO FALSIFY REPORT OR FIND EXCUSE FOR NOT REPORTING, EITHER OF WHICH LEAD TO PROBLEMS.

4. AGAINST ANTICIPATED SOV ATTACK WE BELIEVE OUR RESPONSE, AS OUTLINED IN TODIS 174 IS ONE WHICH EVEN OUR FRIENDS WILL FIND HARD TO DEFEND. IT ALLOWS SOVS BUILD CONVINCING CASE THAT U.S. MILITARY SECRECY IN OUTER SPACE IS SOURCE OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION AND ALLOWS SOVS EASY EXCUSE FOR TARNISHING IDEA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN PEACEFUL USES IF THAT IS THEIR PURPOSE. THEREFORE WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO DUCK ISSUE AND THAT AT LEAST BY FALL GA IT MUST BE MET HEAD ON. FOL OBSERVATIONS ARE INTENDED TO BE HELPFUL;

A. OUR BEST POSTURE WOULD BE IF WE COULD REPORT MINIMAL DATA OF NATURE WE ARE NOW REPORTING ON ALL RPT ALL LAUNCHES WHICH ACHIEVE ORBIT WITHOUT EXCEPTION. FOR EXAMPLE, IF IT IS ONLY PAYLOAD WE MUST CONCEAL, WE SEE NO REASON WHY WE COULD NOT FILE PRESENT LEVEL OF DATA ON ALL SHOTS INCLUDING SENSITIVE ONES (WE GIVE NO MEANINGFUL INFO ON PAYLOAD ON SHOTS -- NOR DOES USSR).

B. WE PRESUME, IN ACCORDANCE OUR CURRENT PRACTICE, THAT U.S. WILL REPORT ORBITAL DATA ON ALL OBJECTS IN "SUSTAINED" ORBIT. IF WHAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONCEAL ARE ORBITAL CHARACTERISTICS

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BUT NOT LAUNCHINGS OF SHOTS OF SHORT DURATION THEN MUCH DEPENDS ON OUR ESTIMATE OF SOVIET TRACKING CAPABILITIES. ONLY IF WE ARE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THEY CANNOT LOCATE AND TRACK LIVE OBJECT SHOULD WE CONSIDER ITS CONCEALMENT BY SUCH DEVICES AS CLAIMING IT FAILED TO ACHIEVE ORBIT, OR HAS DECAYED IF IT HAS NOT, OR IS IN "POSITION UNCERTAIN" (AS WAS CASE WITH 1961 KAPPA 1). IF THERE IS RISK THAT SOVS MIGHT TRACK AND LOCATE OBJECT, YET WE STILL WISH CONCEAL ORBITAL DATA, THEN BEST ANSWER MIGHT BE TO REPORT SHORT DURATION ORBITS UNDER SPECIAL CATEGORY, SUCH AS WE DID IN GLENN FLIGHT, IN WHICH WE WOULD SUPPLY GENERAL BUT UNPRECISE ORBITAL DATA, OR SIMPLY REGISTER OBJECT WITHOUT ANY ORBITAL DATA AT ALL. SEPARATE PARA OF REPORT WOULD THEN SAY SOMETHING LIKE: "IN ADDITION TO ABOVE SATELLITES IN ORBIT ON DATE INDICATED, U.S. ALSO LAUNCHED FOL SATELLITES SINCE LAST REPORTING DATE WHICH ARE NO LONGER IN ORBIT: LIST TYPE, DATE, PURPOSE, AND (POSSIBLY) GENERAL ORBIT."

C. IF, HOWEVER, WE ARE NOW SUCCESSFULLY (OR PROBABLY) CONCEALING BOTH LAUNCHES AND ORBITS, WE PRESUMABLY MUST MAINTAIN PRESENT POSITION OF NOT REPORTING ON SOME LAUNCHES. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES OUR BEST JUDGMENT WOULD BE THAT IT IS BEST TO BE FRANK. WE WOULD THUS SUGGEST U.S. CONTINUE TO ARGUE THAT PURPOSE OF RES IS TO MAINTAIN PERIODIC INVENTORY OF VEHICLES IN ORBIT; THIS WE INTEND TO FOLLOW; HOWEVER, AND THIS WOULD BE KEY ADDITION, WE WOULD SAY THAT IT IS WELL KNOWN FACT THAT U.S. IS EXPERIMENTING WITH SATELLITES DESIGNED TO PROVIDE MEASURES OF PROTECTION AGAINST SURPRISE ATTACK; WHERE THESE ARE IN SUSTAINED ORBIT THEY WILL BE REPORTED TO MEET PURPOSES UN RES; OTHERWISE WE WILL NOT REPORT THEM BECAUSE THEY RELATE TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY. WE COULD ADD THAT NO WEAPONS INCLUDED IN ANY U.S. SATELLITES AND REFER TO OUR PROPOSAL RE INSPECTION OF ALL LAUNCHES IN DISARMAMENT FORUM. EVENTUALLY (SOON, BECAUSE PUBLIC SOV PROPOSAL FOR "DECLARATION" AGAINST USE OF SATELLITES FOR SURVEILLANCE WILL FORCE US INTO OPEN) WE WILL BE FORCED INTO SOME SUCH POSITION IF PRESENT DECISIONS

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MUST STAND, AND IN OUR VIEW WE WILL DO MUCH BETTER AND GET MORE SUPPORT IF WE STATE OUR REAL POLICY AT OUTSET.

D. IF PRESENT PROCEDURE IS DESIGNED ONLY TO PROTECT FUTURE LAUNCHES WHICH U.S. HOPES BE ABLE TO CONCEAL, SIMILAR COMMENTS WOULD APPLY.

5. NONE OF ABOVE WILL AVOID DIFFICULTIES RAISED BY CONTINUED SOV INSISTENCE ON JOINT DECLARATION BANNING USE OF SATELLITES FOR MILITARY RECONNAISSANCE. WE BELIEVE OUR BEST RESPONSE TO THIS IS TO SAY WE PREPARED CONSIDER SUCH QUESTION IN DISARMAMENT CONTEXT AND FORUM. AT SAME TIME WE MUST BE CAREFUL TO AVOID IMPLICATION THAT SUCH USE IS NOT PEACEFUL WITHIN MEANING UN CHARTER WHICH PERMITS SELF-DEFENSE.

STEVENSON


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UNCLASSIFIED when Approved For Release 2001/08/08 : CIA-RDP80-00630R000100150067-4

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CONTROL AND COVER SHEET FOR TOP SECRET DOCUMENT

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	25X1A9a	REGISTRY
SOURCE		CIA CONTROL NO.
O/DD/R		155854
DOC. NO.		DATE DOCUMENT RECEIVED
DOC. DATE 27 April 1962		30 April 1962
COPY NO. 5		LOGGED BY
NUMBER OF PAGES 2		
NUMBER OF ATTACHMENTS		
Reference		

Reference

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